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1. The "Institut fuer Zeitgeschichte" (Institute for Contemporary History) was ordered by Karglitz through Franz Dahlem to poll the population concerning their views on the following points:

1. What were the effects of the easing of interzonal traffic on the East German population?
 2. Is the rationing system at present in use in the GDR to be retained or abolished?
2. This polling took place in Leipzig and Kreis Aschersleben between 20 and 24 April 1954. It had the following results:

About 72 percent of all those contacted answered question No.1 in a positive way. These persons pointed out that the easing of interzonal traffic made possible the resumption of contacts with family members and friends in West Germany. They also stated that a visit in West Germany showed that many conditions there left much to be desired. On the positive side of the ledger people referred to the greater amount of personal freedom, a higher standard of living, the payment of much higher pensions, and the freedom from continuous controls in West Germany. The weak points in the West German system noted by West German visitors were: excessive luxury side by side with low wages, the scarcity of housing facilities, the school system, and the absence of sufficient scholarships for students, lack of work, insufficient care for the youth, and the absence of price ceilings. Eleven percent of those questioned answered question No.1 in the negative. They pointed out that East German visitors in West Germany were liable to be recruited as West German agents and that these visitors were not in a position to form a critical judgment of the spurious facade of prosperity built up by the West. The remainder of those polled were undecided. Regarding question No.2, 86 percent of those asked for their opinion were in favor of the existing rationing system, mostly because this system guaranteed low prices for essential commodities such as meat, fat, sugar, and coal. About 8 percent of those polled were against rationing, while the remainder were indifferent. The public opinion poll clearly showed that about 70 percent of those questioned rejected the issuance of differentiated ration cards rewarding persons of vital importance to the regime with more food and better clothing.

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